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Home Sweet Home — Permanent Anchorage Offices



It's taken several months and a couple of moves, but we have finally achieved our goal of offering *welcoming, accessible, and safe environments for people to come for help with their problems* in Anchorage. This Spring, we moved into our permanent office suite on the second floor of the Legislative Office Building at 1500 West Benson Boulevard. With support from the folks at the Legislative Affairs Agency, our suite provides a much more secure and comfortable space — with plenty of free parking for visitors. We are also more conveniently located for referrals of constituents from Anchorage legislators and their staff, and the Legislative Information Office. Come by and see us!

Strategic Plan Goals — Progress Report

In 2017, we adopted the [Alaska State Ombudsman Strategic Plan 2017-2022](#) to help guide and measure our organizational performance. Goal 3 is that *Ombudsman investigations are conducted and reported in a timely fashion*. The critical strategy for achieving that goal is to *implement an updated, intuitive case management system that supports investigative processes and management of workflow*. We are excited to share that we launched our new case management system on July 11, 2019. This system is expected to increase efficiency for our intake team and streamline our workflow processes. It also offers far more accurate and robust reporting functions, so we can better monitor and share our performance with legislators and the public.

With support from Legislative Affairs, we issued a competitive solicitation in Fall 2018. Legislative Council approved award of the contract to i-Sight (Customer Expressions), a company specializing in case management systems, in December. Project parameters were finalized in January and the project kick-off was February 1, 2019. With a great deal of help from our LAA friends, contributions from the entire ombudsman team, and excellent work by i-Sight and our consultants at Wostmann & Associates, we stayed on schedule and launched on time. The Ombudsman extends special thanks to Tina Strong and JC Kestel, former and current Legislative Procurement Officers, and IT Manager Tim Banaszak and Networking and Programming Supervisor Shay Wilson for their advice and support during the project.


Ombudsman Grievance Process and Report

Last Spring, we [updated the Alaska State Ombudsman Grievance Policy](#) to reflect best practices and to ensure that we modeled the kind of complaint resolution process we encourage state agencies to offer. In the year prior, we received only 3 grievances, due mostly to the lack of a clear or easy way to make a grievance. We now provide information about our grievance process and a simple grievance form on our website. We share information about the process in every letter closing or declining review of a complaint. This is because we want complainants and others involved in ombudsman investigations to know how to make a grievance, and to have confidence that we will look at their concerns with the same objective lens we use for complaints about other agencies.

Since the Ombudsman adopted the new grievance policy (March 1, 2018-June 30, 2019), we have received **35** grievances related to the **2,458** complaints we reviewed during this same time. All the grievances were related to the decision to close an investigation or to decline a complaint for investigation. The Ombudsman (or her designee) found the grievance justified or partially justified in 8 cases. In those cases, the complaint was either forwarded for review (having been declined at intake), re-opened for further review, or other remedial action was taken.

Citizen complaints about all branches of government, including the Ombudsman, provide important information about the efficiency and effectiveness of public services. They also provide opportunities to communicate with citizens about their concerns and expectations, and to resolve problems informally.

Read more about the ombudsman grievance process at <http://ombud.alaska.gov/faqs/ombudsman-grievance-process/>.



OMBUDSMAN GRIEVANCE FORM

NAME _____ DATE _____

COMPLAINT NUMBER _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE NUMBER _____ DO YOU HAVE VOICE MAIL? YES NO

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

The Alaska State Ombudsman is committed to resolving citizen's complaints and grievances fairly, objectively, and respectfully. This includes grievances about our office.

Grievances must be made in writing, unless you have a disability or other significant barrier to sending your concerns in writing. **Your grievance is confidential.** You will receive a form telling you we have received your grievance. Your grievance will be reviewed by the Ombudsman, who will interview the investigator and/or other people involved in the investigation of your complaint. You will receive a written response within 20 days after your grievance is received.

WHAT IS YOUR GRIEVANCE ABOUT?

☐ My complaint was declined
☐ Investigation of my complaint was discontinued

☐ The investigator made a mistake
☐ It took/is taking too long to investigate my complaint

☐ The investigator isn't/wasn't objective
☐ A staff person was rude to me

☐ Other _____

Complaints about who has been assigned to investigate your complaint, the allegations we investigated or the standards we used to evaluate the allegations, the findings of an investigation, and whether we accepted an agency's actions to resolve the complaint are not subject to the grievance process.